



The Wadden Sea National Park 2019-2024

PLAN



INTRO- DUCTION

The Wadden Sea National Park is the largest national park in Denmark. The aim of the park, which opened in 2010, is to conserve, protect and strengthen local nature, landscape and heritage values, and to encourage a sustainable development of the area for guests, businesses and the local population.

The Wadden Sea National Park is the only international park in Denmark, being home to the transnational UNESCO World Heritage Site, stretching from Ho Bugt in Denmark, along the German coast, to Den Helder in the Netherlands. As part of the trilateral Wadden Sea collaboration with the Netherlands and Germany, the National Park works for the joint protection of the Wadden Sea World Heritage Site.

WHAT IS A NATIONAL PARK PLAN?

The aims of Danish National Parks are stipulated in the National Park Law of 2007. The National Park Plan aims to ensure that the 12 goals of the National Park Law are realised. In the development of this plan we realise a central tenet of the Law, which is to invite ideas and input from local citizens, businesses and organisations.

Having received almost 800 ideas and proposals for the 2019-2024 plan, we are pleased to present a comprehensive plan, which is a testament to local ownership of and collaboration for the sustainable development of the Wadden Sea National Park. Thank you to all who have contributed.

This publication serves as a short introduction to the full Wadden Sea National Park Plan:

Our core story –
which is our essence;
our driving force

Activities
up to 2024

Our dream and the
road to achieving that
dream – vision statement,
mission statement, values
and working principles



OUR CORE STORY

The Wadden Sea is something extraordinary. We have tried to capture this in our core story:

When you meet us from the Wadden Sea, you immediately feel the distinct power of the area. You are closer to nature in such a way that stormy day can seem scary. The culture is strong. The houses are different. The people here are formed by our unique way of life. Even when we dance, we are different.

The nature here is beautiful. And tenacious. It is light. And dark. The contrasts are unparalleled. When the day ends, the sun covers never ending beaches in gold. The interactions are never the same, but always present. Meet them in the marshlands. Feel the steady ebb and flow of the tides.

The Wadden Sea is a key to unlocking a deeper understanding of nature. Indispensable for the world's migratory birds. It is a larder. In every way an enormous resource, where we work for plants and animals. We protect our world heritage and pass it on to your children.

The Wadden Sea National Park embraces many stakeholders. We are devotees with a common goal: to protect and sustainably develop the prosperity of the area with respect for the past, present and future. We do this in very tangible ways through collaboration, the sharing of knowledge, educational development and the creation of unique products, which you can buy and enjoy.

Meet the Wadden Sea.

Use the area with respect and get lasting experiences in which you can immerse yourself and carry with you forever.

THE DREAM AND THE WAY FORWARD

We have a **vision** – a dream –, which serves as the objective for our efforts. When the dream becomes reality, the Wadden Sea National Park will be internationally recognised as an outstanding marshland, gert and tidal zone of world-class standard.

The National Park will be enjoyed, protected and developed in a sustainable interaction between nature and people.

The Wadden Sea National Park's mission statement describes what we will do to realise our dream. Fundamentally, we will work to enrich the natural and cultural values of the Wadden Sea, which means that:

We will achieve our goals through six focus areas (see p. 10-17). Respecting our cultural and natural values is reflected in the way in which we carry out our work.



We are dedicated to reaching our vision. And we do this because the Wadden Sea is irreplaceable. In addition, we will inspire all our stakeholders to enjoy, protect and develop the Wadden Sea in a sustainable way.

We will work to protect, strengthen and develop nature, landscape, the geological values and the cultural heritage of the region

We will work to increase opportunities for experiencing the values of the area

We will support science, education and interpretation pertaining to and of the site

We will work for the local community and local businesses

We will work determinedly to further develop the collaboration with the Netherlands and Germany with regards to the Wadden Sea and the World Heritage Site



VISION

The Wadden Sea National Park will be internationally recognised as an outstanding marshland, gest, and tidal zone of world-class standard.

The National Park will be enjoyed, protected and developed in a sustainable interaction between nature and people.

VISION MISSION VALUES FOCUS AREAS

Our mission statement describes what we do and how we do it. Our vision sets our goals. And we work towards this goal through our six focus areas.

MISSION

We will work to enrich the natural and cultural values of the Wadden Sea

VALUES

Inspiring
Dedicated
Irreplaceable

FOCUS AREA 1

Nature and landscape

FOCUS AREA 4

Education, research and interpretation

FOCUS AREA 2

Culture and cultural heritage

FOCUS AREA 5

Local community, business and tourism

FOCUS AREA 3

Recreation

FOCUS AREA 6

Trilateral Wadden Sea and World Heritage collaboration

OVERVIEW

This National Park plan was developed based on the evaluation of the work carried out during the 2013-2018 National Park Plan period. During this period, the National Park achieved good results and gathered valuable experience. During these first five years, our work was aligned with the 12 goals set out in the National Park Law. Based on evaluations carried out in the first Danish National Parks: Thy, Mols Bjerger and the Wadden Sea we, decided to concentrate these 12 goals into fewer focus areas.

Thus, our 12 goals have been accumulated in the following six focus areas:

- 1) Nature and landscape
- 2) Education, research and interpretation
- 3) Local community, business and tourism
- 4) Culture and cultural heritage
- 5) Recreation
- 6) Trilateral Wadden Sea and World Heritage collaboration

Towards 2024

OUR STRATEGY

The Wadden Sea National Park works for nature – and for nature being a driver for sustainable development in the Wadden Sea region. Our strategy is supported by 11 principles, summarized as follows:

We will take on the role as facilitator in relevant contexts, and tie public and private actors together in value creating solutions

We will attract larger amounts of external financing

We will initiate activities, and we will ensure they are run by our partners

We will implement the World Heritage in transnational collaboration with the Netherlands and Germany

We will be an attractive partner for cooperation and collaboration

We will select our projects so that they increasingly help realize all of the 12 goals outlined in the law

We will in work with fewer, larger and more prioritised projects



The Wadden Sea National Park is also dedicated to working with the United Nation's sustainable development goals, towards a more sustainable future, where no one is left behind.

Focus area 1

NATURE AND LANDSCAPE

In our work with preserving and securing the nature and landscape of the Wadden Sea we will divide our activities in two types: 1) broader nature projects and 2) more focused efforts, for example, with individual species.

The broader activities are typically more expensive to implement and take a longer time to organise. It is, however, these kinds of projects that can make a serious impact, and make greater strides towards achieving our goals. Conversely, the more focused initiatives are less costly and lead to faster, more visible results.

We have therefore chosen to work with both types of activities.

The focused nature activities include:

Regulation of predators

Efforts for individual species e.g. the natterjack toad and black tern

Examine opportunities for more concerted efforts for protecting groundnesting birds

Regulation of invasive species

Increase efforts to combat littering in the seas

Our broader nature projects in the next planning period include:

Active nature management through the excavation of new clay pits

Preparing an overview of the most valuable and fragile nature in the Park

Increase grazing in the marshes, dunes and heathlands on Fanø, the Varde River delta, in the meadows along other rivers and streams feeding into the Wadden Sea

The restoration of rivers and streams feeding into the Wadden Sea

Working for a better and more diverse nature, with more species and better nature experiences in the Tønder marsh

Improved nature, culture and experiences on Mandø

A plan for increased nature management and nature restoration on Rømø

Working closely with the national and trilateral initiatives regarding the migratory flyway for birds and swimway for fish

Focus area 2

CULTURE AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

The National Park will work to increase collaboration with local planners. These efforts will lead to a greater coherence between the work of local councils in the Wadden Sea area and the National Park activities – and strengthen the joint development of, for example, recreational infrastructure together with the interpretation of local cultural heritage.

In addition to this, we will:

Establish a forum for knowledge sharing, project development and collaboration between local public and private cultural actors, and across the border with our German and Dutch partners

Unite nature and culture in the trilateral context



Continue efforts on behalf of maritime cultural heritage

Continue efforts to preserve cultural heritage – including vocational training of traditional crafts

Focus on living cultural heritage – including the interpretation and experience of music, dance and traditional costumes

Support selected art and cultural events

Focus area 3

RECREATION

An increasing number of people use the Wadden Sea for recreational activities. This in itself is welcomed, but there is a need for locals and guests to do so in the most careful and respectful way. This is a core principle for outdoor recreation in the Wadden Sea.

We will:

Develop and communicate advice about best possible conduct in the nature of the Wadden Sea

Work towards a common, interconnected communication of all local points of interest through signposting, interpretation and design.



Identify five to seven visitor centres, which will act as entry points to the National Park and World Heritage Site; establish a number of information and welcome points with interpretation and information, including the use of routes, app, websites, signposting, maps etc.

Make the Wadden Sea National Park and World Heritage more visible, accessible and understandable.

Support opportunities for active, maritime outdoor experiences

Initiate health and wellbeing initiatives with a focus on how activities in nature can contribute to a healthier and better lifestyle across all age groups



EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INTERPRETATION

This area covers both broader interpretation activities and more targeted educational and research initiatives:

Annual thematic events. The National Park partner network day and National Park Day will continue – but we will trial new formats and concepts in order to increase the number of participants and levels of engagement

Increase collaboration and knowledge sharing with regards to interpretation development together with the other Danish national parks

Development of the National Park's education programme, MitVadehav.dk



A Danish Junior Rangers programme was developed and tested in Mols Bjerger National Park. This programme will be evaluated to see if it has merits for implementation in the Wadden Sea National Park

Continued professional development of nature rangers and interpreters

The Wadden Sea National Park research council will continue the development and implementation of the annual Wadden Sea National Park Research Day, and realisation of the Trilateral Research Agenda

Other communication and interpretation initiatives include the National Park magazine, ship, mobile exhibition, website, app, Facebook, Instagram, newsletter, speeches and lectures. These activities will be continued and further developed

Focus area 5

LOCAL COMMUNITY, BUSINESS AND TOURISM

The goal for this focus area is to ensure that the sustainable development of the National Park is carried out together with local stakeholders. We will ensure this through our partnership programme. During the first planning period, we have obtained more than 180 partners.

This effort will be further concentrated through the following initiatives:

Expansion of the National Park ambassador's corps to ensure citizen involvement. Our goal is to have 100 ambassadors by the end of the planning period

Our National Park partners are the first point of contact for visitors and are therefore our most important communication channel. We will develop new experiences and strengthen their communication and interpretation skills, in collaboration with them

We will increase our activities with our World Heritage partners. They will be involved in transnational activities, aimed at improving the world heritage experience, tour packages, guided tours and more. We will fundraise external financing for these projects and activities and we expect to reach 20 world heritage partners

Development of our education and learning website, MitVadehav.dk, will encompass a partner programme for educational and research partners. By end of 2025 we expect to have 20 partners in this programme

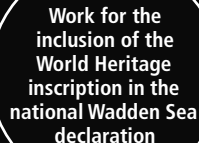
There is a lot of interest in the establishment of a series of National Park products - especially commestibles. We will investigate opportunities for setting up such a programme

Efforts to attract more youth and school camps in the region will be intensified and further developed


TRILATERAL WADDEN SEA AND WORLD HERITAGE COLLABORATION

During the last planning period, the Wadden Sea National Park worked consistently as a partner in the trilateral collaboration, and in connection with the UNESCO World Heritage inscription. We will continue our efforts as Denmark's international National Park, whilst working towards engaging more stakeholders in the trilateral work.


We will:



Work for the inclusion of the World Heritage inscription in the national Wadden Sea declaration



Continue to participate in the Wadden Sea Board, , as well as other relevant working groups – including Network Group Sustainable Tourism, and cross border development projects



Contribute to the activities pertaining to the trilateral cooperation on education, interpretation and research, as well as producing learning materials, interpretation concepts and increasing the number of school and youth camps

Increase efforts to protect and preserve the World Heritage Site and make it more visible and accessible – both through the trilateral collaboration and other collective efforts such as the Wadden Sea Forum, the local Danish Strategy Forum for the Wadden Sea World Heritage, the cooperation of World Heritage Sites of the Kingdom of Denmark and the Nordic World Heritage Association



COMMUNICATION

One of our most important tasks is to disseminate the outstanding natural and cultural heritage values of the Wadden Sea National Park. Our communication efforts will span across the six focus areas and all related activities.

Our communication goals are:



We will achieve these goals through own channels, and by producing professional and curated content, which our partners can use, and through cooperation with all other partners and stakeholders and organisations across the international borders of the joint World Heritage Site.

Partnerships and local citizens are important communication channels. We will work to increase pride among locals in this outstanding natural area of Denmark. We will assist our partners in communicating these messages to the guests and engage users of the region.

CONTINUED EVALUATION

One of the most important lessons from the first planning period, is that all future activities and projects must be designed, so that expected outputs and results are clear. Everyone should be able to see the results of our efforts.

The progress of the projects will be followed closely by the National Park Board, including through management reports, which consistently show if goals, targets and initiatives are realised as planned.

Close monitoring and assessments will be reported in annual reports, which are publically

available, thus ensuring that all our stakeholders are able to follow our progress and contributions to the sustainable development of the area.

We will implement a more transparent work structure that will enable our national and international stakeholders and partners to follow the development of the area. We will draw on reports from the trilateral cooperation. Unfortunately, there is a lack of data on several topics from the Danish Wadden Sea. We will therefore search for new ways to supplement the international data, so we can follow the development in the entire Wadden Sea.

Photo Credit:

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Our dream is to make the Wadden Sea National Park internationally recognised as an outstanding marshland, gert and tidal zone of world class standard. The National Park will be enjoyed, protected and developed through sustainable interactions between nature and people.

We will reach our dream by cultivating the natural and cultural values of the Wadden Sea. We work for nature – and for an understanding of nature as an invaluable asset in the sustainable development for the Wadden Sea region.

Our work is structured into focused areas of activities.

You can read about all of this in this publication. Please visit www.nationalparkvadehavet.dk



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